that is equally out of touch with social realities, on the other.

In the latency period, with children of over six or seven years of age, open excretory jokes or rhymes will always wear a defiant air, and very often the child who indulges in them in the presence of adults is quite obviously trying to provoke the adult into actual prohibition. The actual ground of request that the child should not indulge in these things should be that other people do. not like it.

The situation is different with regard to serious questions or discussions of human biology. This serious discussion will often arise out of playful or joking remarks in young children, and it is one of the inescapable responsibilities of the educator of young children to understand how to deal with the child's questions about the origin of babies and the sexual relations of parents. I have stated what seem to me the most significant reasons for dealing honestly and capably with the child's curiosity about these matters in other writings, for example, *The Nursery Years* and need not elaborate them further here.

Summarily, there are two main reasons : One is the child's emotional need for the frank willingness of parents to give him information on these questions ; the other is the cultural importance of not closing the field of biological interests to the child's developing mind.

With regard to the first point, the child's satisfaction comes not so much by way of the actual information, but rather by the reassurance against his fciost primitive phantasies about the badness and danger of the genitals, of excretory processes and of parental intercourse, which he gains from the simple, frank acceptance and unafraidness of the adult. One of the biggest difficulties for the child in dealing with the secrecy

of adults about sexual processes, and their reproval if he shows any interest in them, is the confirmation which such secrecy affords to the child's own feeling that these things are really bad and dangerous. If his own drive of curiosity to inquire into them is treated as a purely destructive thing, this further confirms his fears. *

It has been said in recent years by some advocates of a frank honesty about sexual matters that if there is no covering up of sexual matters, and little children are given the information they ask for, such children cease to take any secret